

Message Text

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R 132314Z MAY 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:SREF, VS

SUBJECT: REQUESTS FOR ASYLUM BY VIETNAMESE REFUGEES

REFS: VIENTIANE 3062, VIENTIANE 2983, STATE 108703

1. REFTEL OUTLINES GENERAL POLICY WITH RESPECT VIETNAMESE REFUGEES. IN VIEW OF YOUR PARTICULAR SITUATION THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES MAY BE USEFUL.

2. EMBASSY VIENTIANE HAS BEEN AUTHORIZED TO ASSIST IN MOVEMENT OF VIETNAMESE DIPLOMATS AND LOCAL EMPLOYEES OF USG WHO ARE VIETNAMESE NATIONALS. VIENTIANE IS THE ONLY POST WHICH HAS BEEN GRANTED SUCH AUTHORIZATION. THIS ACTION WAS TAKEN ON BASIS OF YOUR REPORTING OF A CRITICAL SITUATION DEVELOPING IN VIENTIANE WITH RESPECT TO HARASSMENT BY DRV OFFICIALS.

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3. WE ARE UNDER CLEAR CONGRESSIONAL INSTRUCTION TO INTERNATIONALIZE RESETTLEMENT OF REFUGEES TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT POSSIBLE. FOR THIS REASON, VIETNAMESE IN THIRD COUNTRIES ARE BEING REQUIRED TO ESTABLISH THAT THEY HAVE

EXHAUSTED ALL OTHER POSSIBLE MEANS OF ASSISTANCE BEFORE ANY CONSIDERATION WILL BE GIVEN TO ASYLUM REQUESTS. THE ONLY ASYLUM REQUESTS GRANTED TO DATE HAVE BEEN THOSE

INVOLVING A CLEAR DANGER TO THE INDIVIDUALS AND THOSE IN WHICH THE INDIVIDUALS WERE ACTUALLY EVACUATED BY THE USG. IN FACT, A SUBSTANTIAL PERCENTAGE OF THOSE EVACUATED TO US STAGING AREAS WILL NOT BE RESETTLING IN THE US BUT IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

4. NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES SUCH AS THAILAND, MALAYSIA, AND SINGAPORE ARE NOW REPORTING LARGE NUMBERS OF VIETNAMESE ARRIVING BY BOAT. USG IS ASSUMING RESPONSIBILITY FOR THESE REFUGEES ONLY IF THEY ARE ON US FLAG VESSELS. THOSE ARRIVING ON SHIPS OF SWEDISH, DANISH, KOREAN, CHINESE, AND OTHER REGISTRIES ARE HELD TO BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COUNTRY OF REGISTRY AND/OR THE COUNTRY OF FIRST REFUGE.

5. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS ICEM, ICRC, AND, MORE RECENTLY, UNHCR ARE MOVING TO COOPERATE WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS IN COPING WITH SITUATION. UNHCR HAS INDICATED THAT IT WILL BE RESPONSIVE TO REQUESTS OF GOVERNMENTS FOR ASSISTANCE. WE REALIZE PGNU IS UNLIKELY SUBMIT SUCH REQUEST ON BEHALF OF VIETNAMESE IN LAOS BUT NEIGHBORING GOVERNMENTS ARE MOVING IN THIS DIRECTION.

6. WE ARE AWARE FROM YOUR PREVIOUS REPORTING THAT THE LARGE NUMBERS OF VIETNAMESE IN LAOS ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY NERVOUS AND MAY BE APPROACHING YOU IN INCREASING NUMBERS TO REQUEST ASYLUM OR ASSISTANCE. YOU SHOULD CONTINUE TO ADVISE THEM THAT ONLY MEANS FOR ENTRY INTO US IS THROUGH NORMAL IMMIGRATION CHANNELS. WITH EXCEPTION OF TWO CATEGORIES MENTIONED PARA 2, WE ARE NOT PREPARED TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY OF PROVIDING ASYLUM FOR THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNITY IN LAOS NOR ARE ANY OF OUR REFUGEE INSTALLATIONS ABLE TO RECEIVE ADDITIONAL NUMBERS OF REFUGEES AT THIS POINT.

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7. FYI THE FRENCH, CANADIAN, UK, AND AUSTRALIAN AUTHORITIES HAVE ANNOUNCED LIBERAL RESETTLEMENT POLICIES AT LEAST WITH RESPECT TO THOSE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE ANY TIES TO THOSE COUNTRIES. KISSINGER

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